

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SINGAP 03984 240336Z

21

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R 240050Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6023

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

US MISSION USUN NEW YORK 357

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

UNCLAS SINGAPORE 3984

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PRG, SN

SUBJECT: GOS PUBLIC ASSESSMENT OF NAM SUMMIT AND SINGAPORE
PRESS COMMENTARY

REF: SINGAPORE 3931

1. SPEAKING TO NEWSMEN ON AUGUST 19 ON HIS RETURN TO SINGAPORE FROM COLOMBO, FOREIGN MINISTER RAJARATNAM DESCRIBED THE SUMMIT AS INCONCLUSIVE AND LACKING IN DIRECTION AND UNITY. RAJARATNAM ASCRIBED THIS DISARRAY TO THERE NO LONGER BEING "A SINGLE OVERRRIDING PROBLEM TO KEEP US UNITED AND TO GIVE US A COMMON PURPOSE." USING AS A POINT OF DEPARTURE PRIME MINISTER LEE'S STATEMENT TO THE SUMMIT (REFTEL), RAJA SAID THAT "ONE HAD HOPED THAT ECONOMIC PROBLEMS TO WHICH WE ARE ALL IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER SUBJECT WOULD HAVE PROVIDED THIS UNIFYING ROLE." HOWEVER, DESPITE NAM UNANIMITY THAT ECONOMIC QUESTIONS WERE OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE, RAJARATNAM SAID "... IN TERMS OF SOLUTIONS, NOTHING HAS GENERALLY EMERGED. NO MAJOR
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 SINGAP 03984 240336Z

DIRECTIVE WAS IN SIGHT AS TO HOW NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES

WOULD COPE WITH POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS WITH THE GREAT POWERS."

2. ADDRESSING HIMSELF TO OMISSION OF KUALA LUMPUR DECLARATION FROM POLITICAL DECLARATION HE ASSERTED THAT SINGAPORE DID NOT ACCEPT LAOTIAN THESIS THAT THERE NOW EXISTED TWO CONTENDING FORCES IN THE REGION. RAJA BLUNTLY STATED "THIS IS NOT A CORRECT DOCTRINE" AND REJECTED INTIMATION THAT OTHER COUNTRIES IN SEA NEEDED LIBERATING.

3. EDITORIALS IN GOVERNMENT-INFLUENCED STRAITS TIMES ON AUGUST 17, 19 AND 21 PRETTY MUCH FOLLOWED VIEWS EXPRESSED BY LEE (REFTEL) AND RAJARATNAM. ONE COMMENTARY ACCUSED NON-ALIGNMENT THINKING OF BEING " ANCHORED IN THE PAST", CONTINUED LAMBASTING OF THE UNITED STATES AND TRUMPETING OF INDOCHINESE VICTORY OVER IMPERIALISM WAS TERMED UNFAIR AND AS SERVING "ONLY TO REDUCE THE CREDIBILITY OF THE NON-ALIGNMENT MOVEMENT." MOREOVER, "RITUALISTIC DENU- CIATIONS" OF THE WEST COULD CAUSE PREVAILING TIDE OF SYMPATHY FOR POORER COUNTRIES TO EBB.

4. STRAITS TIMES CHARACTERIZED THE LAOTIAN AMENDMENT TO THE POLITICAL DECLARATION AS AN "UNFRIENDLY ACT" TOWARDS NON-COMMUNIST SEA COUNTRIES. INDOCHINESE STATEMENTS AT NAM SUMMIT WERE SEEN AS BODING ILL FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN COMMUNIST AND NON-COMMUNIST COUNTRIES IN SEA AND SPECIFICALLY AS BEING CONTRARY TO THE RECENT PROFESSIONS OF FRIENDSHIP MADE BY THE VIETNAMESE DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER PHAN HEIN.

5. FINALLY, STRAITS TIMES AGREED WITH MOYNIHAN VIEW THAT NAM IN DANGER OF BECOMING" JUST ANOTHER COMMUNIST FRONT ORGANIZATION" AS MEMBERS OF MOVEMENT WERE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF IT TO PROPAGATE THEIR IDEOLOGIES. AUGUST 21 EDITORIAL STATED THAT NAM IS AT A CROSSROADS AND NON-ALIGNMENT CONCEPT WILL HAVE TO BE REDEFINED. DISAPPEARANCE OF COLONIALISM AND PROCESS OF DETENTE HAVE ERODED MUCH OF PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS OF NAM AND "IN WHAT MIGHT BE TERMED THE INTERIM PERIOD OF NON-ALIGNMENT DEVELOPMENT THE COMMUNISTS ARE USING IT TO FURTHER THEIR OWN ENDS. IT IS BECOMING A FORM FOR THE UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 SINGAP 03984 240336Z

OPPORTUNISTS. THESE MOVES WILL HAVE TO BE COUNTERED AND NEW OR REDEFINED PURPOSE FOR THE MOVEMENT WILL HAVE TO EMERGE IF IT IS TO RE-ESTABLISH POLITICAL CREDIBILITY." HOLDRIDGE

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